DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 157 195 95 EA 010 755

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TITLE The Creation of Deviant Behavior in American High Schools.
INSTITUTION National Council on Crime and Delinquency, Hackensack, N.J. NewGate Resource Center.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Feb 78
NOTE 61p.; Chapter 27 of "Theoretical Perspectives on School Crime, Volume I"; For other papers in this volume, see EA 010 729-768

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$3.50 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Failure; *Behavior Theories; *Delinquent Behavior; Disadvantaged Youth; *Peer Influence; School Vandalism; Secondary Education; *Status Need; Student Participation; *Student School Relationship; Student Subcultures

ABSTRACT

One of 52 theoretical papers on school crime and its relation to poverty, this chapter presents an institutional product theory of school crime, along with related evidence and a preliminary test of the theory. Two theoretical traditions, Albert Cohen's "delinquent subculture" theory and the social psychological "cognitive balance" theory, can predict a causal chain linking school failure to various forms of deviant behavior via "affect toward school" and "deviant peer group involvement." A study of male students in two central New York State high schools supports the causal chain with the exception that "affect toward school" does not appear to intervene between "school failure" and the subsequent variables in the causal chain. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed. (Author/MLF)

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THE CREATION OF DEVIANT BEHAVIOR IN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS

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A paper from
"Theoretical Perspectives on School Crime"

Submitted to
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
February 1978

Submitted by
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY
Hackensack, N.J.

EA 010 755

ABSTRACT

Two theoretical traditions, Albert Cohen's "delinquent subculture" theory and the social psychological "cognitive balance" theory, can predict a causal chain linking school failure to various forms of deviant behavior via "affect toward school" (liking or disliking school) and "deviant subgroup involvement" (having or not having deviant friends). A study of male students (N = 469) in two central New York State high schools supports the causal chain with the exception that "affect toward school" does not appear to intervene between "school failure" and the subsequent variables in the causal chain. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Introduction

There is an old debate among sociologists who study what is called "the prison community." On one side are those who contend that the values and behavior of prison inmates are produced by the conditions inherent to the prison setting itself. The other camp contends that much of what is termed the "inmate culture" is imported from outside the prison, that criminals learn how to behave in the prison setting before they ever set foot inside the prison. Both are probably partly true; some prison behavior is produced by the institutional setting, and some is due to the predispositions of the people who come into prisons. The same dispute will undoubtedly develop between investigators examining the phenomenon of school crime--and both sides will probably be partly right.

I wish to present a plausible "institutional product" theory of school crime, along with related evidence and a preliminary test of the theory. Let me emphasize at the outset that this theory seeks to explain some, perhaps the lesser part, of what is termed delinquent behavior.[1] Factors outside the school are clearly responsible for most delinquent behavior in or out of the school setting, but whatever delinquency is

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[1]The term "delinquent behavior" should not be taken lightly. For some, "delinquency" means people who have a "delinquent character" or "antisocial attitudes." There is good reason to believe, however, that most delinquent behavior, especially minor offenses, is enacted by youth who are generally well behaved and who do not view themselves as delinquents. (Gold, 1970, Ch. 1).

produced by school conditions may well be eliminated by school reforms. Such factors as the family, chronic economic problems, or racial discrimination are less amenable to change than is the way schools are organized.

One of the most influential theories of delinquent behavior to appear in recent decades is the "delinquent subculture" theory proposed by Albert Cohen (1955). This paper will present a review of Cohen's thinking, a restatement of Cohen's theory in terms of a social psychological approach known as "balance theory," a statement of hypotheses derived from the theory, and an examination of evidence related to the theory.

The School and Delinquency: Albert Cohen

The possibility that the school could somehow produce delinquent behavior did not escape Cohen's predecessors. Such important early theorists as Cyril Burt (1929) and William Healy and Augusta Bronner (1936) attributed some delinquent behavior to school conditions. William Kvaraceus wrote a fine book, Juvenile Delinquency and the School (1945), and a number of others blamed some delinquency on school conditions. But it is probably fair to say that Cohen provided the first systematic theory of how school conditions might produce delinquent behavior. Cohen considered his theory a "general theory of subcultures," but the general theory is clearly applicable to the school setting, as we shall see.

Cohen's general theory of subcultures begins by arguing that human behavior constitutes efforts to solve problems. Some actions are successful in that they reduce the discomfort and tension associated with problems, while some actions are unsuccessful and perhaps create new problems to compound previously unsolved ones. If people's behavior can, to a large extent, be explained in terms of problem solving, then it can be understood by studying the problems being faced.

Cohen argues that a general culture emerges and persists in any social system. This general culture constitutes a socially standardized "frame of reference" that provides solutions to common problems faced by the actors in that system. For some actors in some cases, however, the general culture does not provide solutions to problems. Indeed, the generally shared culture may pose problems for some actors.

What happens to those who have problems for which the general culture offers no solution? Individuals who cannot find acceptable solutions to their problems in the general culture may adapt by employing one or more psychological "mechanisms of adjustment," such as compensation, projection, rationalization, etc. They may seek illicit solutions--e.g., escaping an unhappy marriage by desertion. But, in the event that these adaptations fail and the problem remains, and if a given problem or set of problems is shared by a sufficient number of actors, those actors may collectively develop a special cultural solution to the shared problems. Since this solution is shared among a limited number of actors and serves

the needs of a limited number of actors, the new cultural solution may be called "subculture."

Instances such as numbers of soldiers reporting to their medical aid station with common symptoms that have no physical basis, religious cults promising special salvation to believers, or mobs committing acts that violate conventional morality but that seemed acceptable or desirable during the life of the mob are cited by Cohen as examples of collective, cultural solutions to special problems.

Subcultural Solutions to Status Problems

This paper is concerned with one kind of problem--the achievement of status. Cohen shows how "collective problem solving" might occur among low-status actors:

> Status problems are problems of achieving respect in the eyes of one's fellows. Our ability to achieve status depends upon the criteria of status applied by our fellows, that is, the standards or norms they go by in evaluating people. These criteria are an aspect of their cultural frames of reference. If we lack the characteristics or capacities which give status in terms of these criteria, we are beset by one of the most typical and yet distressing of human problems of adjustment. One solution is for individuals who share such problems to gravitate toward one another and jointly establish new norms, new criteria of status which define as meritorius the characteristics they do possess....Such new status criteria would represent new subcultural values different from or even antithetical to those of the larger social system. (1955, pp. 65-66. emphasis in original)

Cohen emphasizes that the "solution" must be shared by a group. Sould an actor individually redefine the commonly held criteria for status he will, most likely, further remove himself from the respect of his fellows. On the other hand, an

individual's rejection of conventional criteria for status will be sustained and reinforced if his rejection is shared by a group of his peers; and this group may well become a source of the respect (status) he cannot gain in the larger system.

The group that shares a subculture that opposes a part of the larger culture may become more and more alienated or separated from the larger system. The members of the subgroup may be rejected by members of the larger system, because of the subgroup's sharing criteria for status that are disapproved in the larger culture. Members of the subgroup may, in turn, reject members of the larger society because they, by conforming to the demands of the larger culture, do not meet the criteria for status that are shared in the subgroup. Conventional people may consider certain kinds of deviants "sick" or "immoral," while the deviants may contemptuously refer to conventional people as "squares."

This mutual repudiation reaches its extreme when the subculture begins to accord status to its members who engage in activities disapproved in the larger culture, <u>because</u> they earn the disapproval of the larger system. "Certain kinds of conduct, that is, become reputable (in the subculture) precisely because they are disreputable in the eyes of the 'out-group' (the larger system)" (Cohen, 1955, p. 68).

Before we proceed it would seem appropriate to outline briefly our reasons for employing Cohen's general theory of

subcultures rather than his more specific (and more known) "delinquent subculture" theory.

Cohen's theory of delinquency constitutes his effort to apply his general theory to the specific phenomenon of gang delinquency. Cohen seeks to explain certain "facts," the most important of which is the concentration of the delinquent subculture and gang delinquency among working-class boys. Further, he seeks to explain the "nonutilitarian, malicious and negativistic" (1955, p. 25. original in italics) nature of the delinquent subculture and of much delinquent behavior.

Cohen's explanation of these facts centers on the development or adoption of a subculture by working-class boys who cannot succeed in a world dominated by middle-class criteria for status. These boys, aware of their failure to evoke the respect of others in the community and in school, and lacking the social skills necessary to elicit that respect, face a "problem" of low status. Frustrated by their inability to climb within the (middle-class) status system, these boys are ready to adopt, or collectively to create, new criteria of status. The new criteria provide status to the erstwhile failures, but to embrace the new criteria for status one must abandon the old.

Even though one must abandon the old criteria for status in order to embrace the new, the reason for the hostile, nonutilitarian, negativistic, and malicious nature of the delinquent subculture remains unexplained. It is this which

Cohen addresses in the final portion of his theory. Cohen suggests (1955, p. 132) that the mechanism of "reaction-formation" might explain the value placed by the delinquent subculture on the open flouting of middle-class norms. Gang boys steal, not for the value of the stolen property, but (at least partly) because stealing is forbidden by the middle-class norms that the boys have internalized and later rejected.

The more simple general theory is more appropriate here for several reasons. First, Cohen's "special theory" is interested in the consequences of low status for boys in schools, but it deals with low status in the community class structure as well. Second, some of the "facts" that Cohen seeks to explain may not be true. Kitsuse and Dietrick (1959) question the validity of Cohen's assertion that gang delinquency is nonutilitarian. They also point out that much malicious behavior (in the form of vandalism) is regularly enacted by youth who enjoy very high status in the community and in the school. Cloward and Ohlin (1960) argue that much delinquent behavior by gang boys, far from being negativistic, is oriented toward the criminal opportunity structure that exists in the neighborhood. Short and Strodbeck (1965) and Sykes and Matza (1957) question Cohen's assertion that subcultural delinquents totally reject middle-class values in favor of their antitheses. These criticisms cast doubt on Cohen's theory of delinquency. Indeed, the criticisms have often been part of revisions of the theory. Cohen's general theory has not suffered such a beating (Cohen, 1966, p. 108).

Finally, the general theory is well suited to the present problem. We are interested in boys who share a problem (low status) in a well-defined social system (the high school) and their reaction to this problem (adoption of an antischool subculture). Specifically, we will argue that low school status (failure) leads to dislike for school which leads to involvement with antischool friends and an antischool subculture, which leads to antischool (or deviant) behavior.

An Interpretation of Cohen: Balance Theory

Cohen's general theory of subcultures can be restated in terms of a social psychological approach called "cognitive balance theory." This theory has origins in Gestalt psychology. The two main individuals associated with this approach are Fritz Heider (1958) and Theodore M. Newcomb (1953,1961). The thesis of balance theory is that a person will tend not to harbor conflicting perceptions about two related objects. Rather, a person will tend to view a given pair of related objects in the same terms--either favorably or unfavorably.

Suppose, for example, a person, P, likes another person, O (Figure 1). Suppose also that P believes that O likes X (which may be an idea, a way of behaving, or an individual). Balance theory would predict that P would tend to like X. Likewise, if P already likes X and believes that O also likes X, P will tend to like O. On the other hand, negative feelings

Where P likes O, P tends to adopt an attitude toward X consistent with the attitude of O.

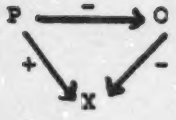
Where P dislikes O, P tends to adopt attitudes toward X opposite the attitude of O.

Figure 1. Congruence of attitudes toward related objects.

toward O will tend to produce dislike for any X that P associates with O. If P should already like X and believe that O dislikes X, P will tend to adopt a dislike for O. What should happen, then, according to balance theory, is that P will tend to adopt consistent or congruent cognitions of O and X. If P loves O it is difficult not to love O's dog. If P hates dogs it will be difficult to love O, unless, perhaps, P can induce the dogcatcher to eliminate the dog. If P should dislike O and knows that O likes fast cars, P should tend to dislike fast cars.

The idea of cognitive balance is rather simple and straightforward for a psychological theory; indeed, Heider (1958) called it "naive psychology." It has two other virtues. It is applicable to a wide variety of conditions, and it has held up well under the fire of empirical testing (Cf. Secord & Bachman, 1974).

How does the balance theory apply to the boy who is failing in school? The boy (P) must either accept the school's negative evaluation of himself (X) or adopt a negative evaluation of the school (O) (Figure 2). Most people want to think



P - the student
O - the school
X - the "self-concept" of the student

Figure 2. Balance theory and school failure.

well of themselves and resist efforts by others to put them down. In order to resist the school's negative evaluation a boy has only limited options. He may try to change the school's evaluation by working hard and trying to improve his performance. He may escape the problem by withdrawing--leaving school. He may try to trivialize the situation, viewing the school's negative evaluation as unimportant. None of these options works very well. It is not easy to improve grades and many will be unable to do so; track assignment may prescribe low grades (Schafer & Olexa, 1971). Parents (and the law) may require attendance, and teachers and counselors will most likely emphasize the gravity of poor school work. There are no constraints, however, to prevent a school failure from adopting a dislike for the school (Cf. Rhodes & Reiss, 1969).

Once the student adopts a dislike for the school he is ready to adopt attitudes, consistent with this dislike, toward objects, people, or ideas which he associates with the school; whatever he believes the school likes he will tend to dislike, and whatever the school dislikes the boy will tend to like (See Figure 3).

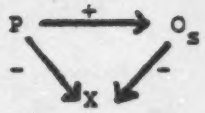
P tends to adopt certain orientations toward values, norms, individuals or symbols (X), perceived by P as associated with the school (O). These orientations tend to be consistent with P's dislike for the school. That is, if P perceives X as approved or liked by O, P tends to adopt a negative orientation toward X. If P perceives X as disapproved or disliked by O, P tends to adopt a positive orientation toward X. Specifically, P tends to adopt a positive orientation (liking, approving) toward individuals and behaviors which, in P's perceptions, are disliked or disapproved by the school.

Figure 3. Attraction to antischool norms and individuals.

The "failure" who has come to dislike the school may tend to be attracted to other failures; the school disapproves of failures, and the boy dislikes the school, so the boy should tend to like individuals who fail. Attracted by their mutual antagonism toward school, a group of such students should form, and tracking practices in schools facilitate this (Schafer & Olexa, 1971; Hargreaves, 1967). This new group, bound together by a common antagonism toward the school and what it stands for, may now provide support for deviant behavior much as the school provides support for conforming behavior[2] (Figure 4).

Balance theory is a theory of cognition, not of behavior, so it is not strictly appropriate to move from readiness to approve antischool behavior to actual behavior. It is easy to

[2]For a similar argument in the case of individuals who reject the "general culture" in a college setting, see Flacks (1963).



P is attracted to a subgroup, O_s, within the school. This subgroup shares with P a dislike for the school and what it stands for.

Figure 4. Formation of deviant subgroup.

imagine, however, a boy who has forsaken efforts to gain the approval of his teachers, and has turned to antischool peers for the kind of respect and recognition we all seek. He would probably be ready to engage in behaviors that express a disdain for the school and what it stands for in order to gain the approval of his peers.

The scenario here is the same as that suggested by Cohen: Failure in school leads to Dislike for School which leads to involvement with Antischool Peers and, stretching balance theory a little, to Antischool Behavior. The balance theory argument has a virtue that Cohen's argument lacks--it is far more systematic. Given the assumptions inherent in balance theory and a few more about the nature of school failure and the limited options available to the person who fails, the process described above is logically necessary. Cohen, on the other hand, adopted an eclectic approach, a theory much less explicit about its assumptions and much less subject to criticism on purely logical grounds.[3]

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[3]This is not to suggest that balance theory is ready to be elevated to the status of an axiomatic theory. But it is far closer to that ideal than is any eclectic approach such as Cohen's.

Following the Causal Chain:

Some Evidence

This next section will review evidence that connects the links of the causal chain.

From Low School Status to Dislike for School

Several authors have suggested that failure in school can be a painful experience (Hargreaves, 1967; Kvaraceus, 1945; Polk & Richmond, 1972; Vinter & Sarri, 1965; Ahlstrom & Havighurst, 1971). Cohen (1955) recognized that, in a competitive system such as the school, where status is, at least in the ideal, almost totally achieved rather than ascribed, success for some implies failure for others.[4]

> However sincerely one may desire to avoid odious comparisons...it is extremely difficult to reward, however subtly, successful conformity without at the same time, by implication, condemning and punishing the non-conformist. (p. 113)

Vinter and Sarri (1965) suggest a more active role by the school in the treatment of failures:

> In addition to offering rewards and recognition to pupils for acceptable conduct or achievement, teaching personnel use a variety of negative sanctions to curb malperformance. Grades are, of course, the chief means of doing both....Those who performed below a certain standard received adverse grades and might also be denied as a direct

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[4] This suggests Thibaut and Kelly's (1959) discussion of subjective status. A person may evaluate the desirability of a relationship in terms of how his outcomes (rewards and costs) compare with those of others. If an individual believes that others like him are enjoying better outcomes, these better outcomes may constitute a "comparison level" or standard by which the individual perceives his own outcomes as failure.

> consequence a wide variety of privileges and opportunities within the school. They lost esteem among their classmates, they were seldom chosen for minor but prestigeful classroom or school assignments, and they were excluded from participation in certain extra-curricular activities. (p. 9, emphasis in original)

Of course, failure in school would be no problem to boys who have no desire to succeed in the first place. This is, poor grades, seeing one's peers excel, and lack of opportunity to enjoy extracurricular activity could hardly bother a boy who, for whatever reason, doesn't care. The evidence indicates, however, that the vast majority of high school boys do care about success in school. Vinter and Sarri (1965) found that almost all of the students they studied were concerned with at least passing their courses. Turner (1964, p. 43) found that all of the boys he studied wanted to finish high school and fully 85 percent desired at least some postsecondary education. Bend (1968), in a study of a national sample of high school boys, found a pattern much the same as that found by Turner. There is evidence that high school boys also seek to engage in prestigeful extracurricular activities in schools (Colemen, 1961; Hauser, 1965; Spady, 1970a).

The punishing experiences associated with low status constitute a problem, then, for low-status individuals. Cohen (1955) is skeptical that many boys can simply

tolerate the censure and disparagement of the school:[5]

> The contempt of indifference of others, particularly of those like schoolmates and teachers with whom we are constrained to associate for long hours every day, is difficult, we suggest, to shrug off. It poses a problem with which one may conceivably attempt to cope in a variety of ways. One may make an active effort to change himself in conformity with the expectations of others; one may attempt to justify or explain his inferiority....One may tell himself he really doesn't care what these people think; one may react with anger and aggression. But the least probable response is simple, uncomplicated, honest indifference. (pp. 123-124)

We might add that, since it is the mission of the schools to encourage behavior (getting good grades, extracurricular activity) at which the failure is doing poorly, the failure is likely to be reminded of his substandard performance and encouraged to "work harder." Thus, school counselors and teachers can make it very difficult to maintain an indifferent attitude toward failure. The negative sanctions associated with failure constitute a "problem of adjustment," a problem difficult to evade or ignore.

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[5]While Cohen pays little attention to the psychological processes by which one might simply absorb or redefine the negative sanctions imposed by the school, it is an interesting question. Stinchcombe (1964, pp. 124-128) suggests that girls might become committed to some future goal (marriage) for which school success or failure is irrelevant. Rather, school provides a period of waiting and dating prior to marriage. Some boys may have occupational goals (e.g., military, working for father) for which school is irrelevant or for which only minimal success (a diploma) is required. Some failures may be oriented to activities outside the school (religion, perhaps), so their school failure will have little import. Some boys may consider themselves inferior and be happy to be barely passing. Some, of course, may not make an emotional response to the obvious low esteem in which the school holds them. We contend that such cases are unusual and that most boys find it difficult to accept their inferior status with equanimity.

If repeated failure (or the punishment associated with failure) cannot be "shrugged off" as Cohen suggests, what reaction or reactions might result? The term "status frustration" is widely employed to describe the supposed dissatisfaction that results from a desire for status coupled with a failure to achieve that status. As Cohen suggests in the quotation above, when we have problems we seek solutions rather than tolerate the "feelings of tension, frustration, resentment, guilt, bitterness, anxiety or hopelessness" (1955, p. 53) that persist until the problems are somehow solved. There can be little doubt that many boys who are failing react by striving to achieve better grades or more active participation in activities. But in a competitive system someone must "lose" if others are to "win." Many boys will never be able to earn the respect of others in the school.[6]

One might expect that a very likely response to continued low status would be the adoption of a dislike for the bestower of that low status, i.e., the school. Cohen suggests this by his use of the words "resentment" and "bitterness" in the

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[6]There are at least three possible reasons that, given a system such as the school where status is based primarily on achievement, some people are almost sure to fail (be low in status). First, as Coleman (1961) points out, "status by its very definition is in scarce supply (p. 143). This is especially true in an achievement-oriented system, since success and failure are determined by comparison to performance of others. Second, there is the matter of talent or aptitude. Some students lack the ability to do well in school, either in the classroom or in extracurricular activities. Third, there is considerable evidence that certain school practices and conditions produce failure in some potentially able students (Schafer & Polk, 1967; pp. 234-246).

above quotation. There is a good deal of evidence that boys who are doing poorly in school do, indeed, tend to dislike school. Frease (1969, p. 73) found that boys who were not bound for college had a considerably greater antipathy for school than did their college-bound classmates. Gold (1963) and Kelly and Pink (1973) found that grades were somewhat associated with liking or disliking school. Earlier studies (Glueck & Glueck, 1950; Kvaraceus, 1945) as well as the more recent work of Hirschi (1969), Hargreaves (1967) and Schafer and Polk (1967) suggest a link between failure in school and dislike for the school. Cohen's general theory of subcultures is vague on the point at which the failure adopts a dislike for the system in which he is failing, but balance theory is quite clear--failure directly produces dislike.

The "balance" position receives empirical support from Hirschi (1969, pp. 123-124). He showed that, as long as a boy seeks to succeed in school, he will be constrained from involvement with a group that is disapproved of by the school or whose behavior will result in negative sanctions. Further, the more intensely he wants to succeed in school, the less likely he is to jeopardize his chances by behaving in ways of which the school disapproves. As long as a boy suffers "status frustration" he will conform to school expectations.

Until a boy gives up his quest for success and adopts a hostile attitude toward the school, he is unlikely to seek

antischool friends to openly engage in disapproved behavior.[7] To be consistent with the balance theory predictions outlined earlier in this paper, we have modified Cohen's theory somewhat and placed "dislike for school" as intervening between low school status and the subsequent variables. We next examine why boys who dislike school should be attracted to each other and why these groups of boys should share a generally anti-school orientation or subculture.

From Dislike for School to Antischool Friends

That people tend to be attracted to other people whom they perceive as having similar attitudes is well documented (Newcomb, 1953, 1961; Byrne, 1961, 1969; Clore & Byrne, 1974; Aronson, 1969). Thus, assuming "dislike for school" to be a salient attitude, we might expect boys who share that attitude to be attracted to one another.

A recent experimental study using college students as subjects (Harvey & Kelley, 1973) provides further reason to expect boys who dislike school to tend to choose each other as friends. Subjects who had failed at an experimental task tended strongly to dislike others who had succeeded, but tended to be strongly attracted to others who also had failed.

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[7] Even the abandonment of success goals does not inevitably lead to attraction to antischool boys. Rhodes and Reiss (1969) found that the modal response to repeated failure in school was "passive compliance" (apathy); school became something to be endured. However, many boys did engage in deviant behavior, and the evidence cited in this paper indicates that many boys do develop an antipathy toward the school.

This study, albeit not a field study and not conducted with high school students, provides a link between failure, adoption of a dislike for successful peers, and attraction to other failures. Hargreaves (1967) found a similar pattern in his study of English secondary school boys. Boys who were doing poorly in school were attracted to similar boys and tended to dislike the more successful boys.

Schools may contribute to this tendency of boys who dislike school to associate with one another. Boys doing poorly in school (many of whom, we argue, will dislike school) are likely to be concentrated in the same classes due to the widespread practice of assigning students to classes on the basis of achievement or perceived ability (Schafer & Polk, 1967; Schafer & Olexa, 1971; Rosenbaum, 1975). Hargreaves (1967) found that boys in the lowest stream, who were by definition low in school status, shared an antipathy toward the school. This antipathy took on a normative character in that boys of low status who attempted to do well academically received negative sanctions from their classmates. While students in the highest stream supported the academic goals and accepted the "pupil role" that the school favored, students in the low streams tended to reject the "pupil role" (conformity to which brought little or no rewards from teachers but plenty of censure from peers) in favor of an antischool or "delinquent" pattern of behavior. The school contributed to this process by concentrating successful and failing boys in the high and low streams, thus causing them to associate with those of like status even in the classrooms.

The concept of subculture may also be employed to explain the apparent mutual attraction of boys who dislike school. A subculture may be seen as a complex of norms, values, symbols, and beliefs that differ from that of a larger, or dominant, culture (Vander Zanden, 1970; pp. 52-62). A subculture may be shared by a well-defined group, but a loose network of people may share a subculture as well (Lerman, 1967a). Indeed, an individual need not form a long-lasting social relationship to participate in some subcultures. The term "plastic hippie," for example, referred to a person who lived like a hippie (i.e., participated in the "hippie subculture") on weekends and returned to a "straight" life during the week.

If more than one subculture exists, or if only one subculture exists alongside a dominant culture in a social system, each may "compete" for the allegiance of the actors in that system (Korbin, 1951; Lerman, 1968; Matza, 1961; Sugarman, 1967). Of course, subcultures don't really "compete," and individuals don't "select" subcultures; rather they are attracted to other individuals who say or do things they find pleasing. For the failure in school, teachers and others who support the official school culture say and do things that are punishing and, therefore, inconsistent with the efforts of the failure to think well of himself. Supporters of an antischool subculture might manifest their antischool orientation in their dress, in their language, in their behavior, and in their verbal expressions of dislike for the school (see Lerman, 1967b; Riggl 1965; Stinchcombe, 1964; and Veld Huisen, 1972). Due to the

antischool nature of the subculture, its adherents are likely to favor (and reward) behavior that is not favored in the official school culture (Cohen, 1955, pp. 65-66). Thus, a boy who has been unable to gain the approval of his teachers and proschool classmates may be attracted to those individuals whose approval he can obtain.[8] This transfer of loyalties from one subculture to another or from the dominant culture to a subculture may be facilitated by the fact that many, if not most, boys experience an antischool orientation on occasion, even though the experience might only be vicarious (see Matza, 1961, p. 105).

From Antischool Friends to Antischool Behavior

The most compelling reason to expect deviant behavior of boys who have antischool friends is the fact that this expectation is strongly supported by the empirical evidence.

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[8] A number of authors (Stinchcombe, 1964; Sugarman, 1967; Veld Huisen, 1972; Phillips & Schafer, 1970; Riggle, 1965; Polk & Halferty, 1966; Polk & Pink, 1971) have found evidence that different groups of students tend to have different kinds of interests and to be involved in different kinds of activities. One cluster of interests and activities is centered on school achievement and activities, while another is centered on non-school activities such as drinking, smoking, and "making the teen scene."
The idea of competing subcultures is suggested by several authors. Hargreaves (1967, Ch. 8), Sugarman (1967, p. 162), and Stinchcombe (1964, Ch. 5) all observe that students with nothing to gain from loyalty to the conventional school culture may shift their loyalty to a competing subculture that they find more rewarding. Lerman (1968) found that individuals were likely to perceive their friends as holding values similar to their own, suggesting that the "attractiveness of a subculture" is more correctly the attractiveness of certain peers.

Empey and Lubeck (1968), Jensen (1972), Short (1957, 1958, 1960), Reiss and Rhodes (1964), Hirschi (1969: 99), Erickson and Empey (1965), Matthews (1968), Loft (1969), Hindelang (1973), Stanfield (1966), Stratton (1967), Gold (1970), and Voss (1964) all found a strong tendency among boys who had deviant friends to engage in delinquent behavior ("delinquency", as used here, includes much minor misconduct along with more serious offenses).

The assertion that those involved in antischool groups will tend to engage in antischool behavior is a causal statement that could suffice on its own. But Cohen takes up the question (and it is an obvious one), of <u>why</u> membership in a group should result in behavior consistent with the shared attitudes of group members. What is the process by which having certain kinds of friends results in certain kinds of behavior? Recall that balance theory does not, strictly speaking, predict behavior, so we rely on Cohen alone for theoretical guidance on this issue.

According to Cohen, antischool groups, like all groups, accord status (respect and recognition) to individuals on the basis of group norms. Boys who are attracted to such groups usually have given up their efforts to achieve status according to school criteria, but they have <u>not</u> given up their quest for status. That we all seek status in one group or another is a basic assumption of Cohen's theory.

Cohen suggests that, since failures are unable to succeed in the eyes of the school, and since thay share a dislike for the school, they tend to establish their own status criteria different from, and probably antithetical to, those of the school. Antischool groups, that is, tend to accord status on the basis of antischool behavior.

For Cohen "criteria for status" may be viewed as an important part of a subculture. The term "culture" in sociology refers to the total sum of knowledge, values, symbols, norms, and technology that is shared among the members of a society. The term "subculture" is seen as "culture" shared among members of a "subgroup" in a given society. We may say that American women share a "feminine subculture" or that truckdrivers share a subculture peculiar to members of that occupational group. Both "women" and "truckdrivers" share in the general American culture, but they may also possess certain bits of knowledge, certain values, certain notions regarding proper conduct, and certain language usages that "nonwomen" or "nontruckdrivers" do not.

According to Cohen, the content of a "truckdrivers' subculture" should provide solutions to special problems shared by truckdrivers. We might expect truckdrivers to know ways of avoiding police penalties when their trucks are overloaded and where to get a good meal on the road. They should develop criteria as to what a good driver is and does and norms regarding permissible conduct on the road. These norms might deal with safety, behavior toward nontruckers, and sexual behavior while on the road.

The boys we have described also share a special problem--low status. When they merge into a group that develop a collective subcultural solution to that problem. That solution, according to Cohen, emphasizes special norms, criteria by which status is accorded. The subculture shared in antischool groups should provide new ways to attain status in the anti-school group rather than in the school in general. If, as we have argued, some of those norms are antithetical to those of the school, a boy must violate school norms (or give that impression) if he is to conform to the norms of an antischool group. For Cohen, much "deviant" behavior actually constitutes <u>conformity</u> to norms of a deviant subculture.

There is surprisingly little evidence that connects group norms with individual behavior. Authors often simply infer the existence of group norms from the behavior of group members. The few studies that have attempted to explore the connection between norms and behavior conflict with one another. Matza (1964, p. 49) found no relationship between various forms of delinquent behavior and approval of such behavior. On the other hand, Hindelang (1970) and Hargreaves (1967) did find such a relationship. Buffalo and Rogers (1971) found that, while delinquents personally opposed delinquent behavior, they believed that their peers approved such behavior. This indicates that group norms (as perceived by group members) may take precedence over the individual's notions of right and wrong, and produce deviant behavior. A recent study of college

students (Acock and DeFleur, 1972) found that, while neither the attitudes of the individual nor the perceived attitudes (norms) of one's peers predicted behavior very well, these factors combined sharply increased the accuracy with which behavior could be predicted. This indicates that group norms, combined with individual attitudes, are more likely to produce behavior than either one alone. Thus, while the evidence is not final, the argument that boys will tend to misbehave to gain the approval of peers is very plausible.

The arguments above boil down to a simple, and by now familiar, chain of events. School status (success or failure) leads to affect toward school (liking or disliking), which leads to involvement in an antischool subgroup (or a lack of such involvement), which leads to behavior (deviant or conforming), as shown in Figure 5. The next section will describe hypotheses derived from the hypothetical chain of events described above and a study conducted to test those hypotheses.

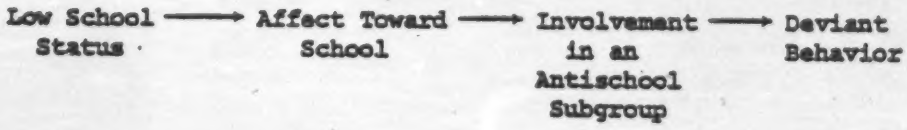

Figure 5. Theoretical causal chain

Hypotheses

The hypothesized chain of events implies certain relationships between its parts.[9] (The reader may wish to make frequent reference to figure 5 during this discussion.) First, since all four parts are causally related, empirical relationships should obtain between them. The direction of the relationships should be consistent with the theoretical discussion. The required relationships between the elements of the causal chain may be stated in three hypotheses:

> Hypotheses 1: School status should be (a) positively related to affect toward school, (b) negatively related to involvement in an antischool subgroup, and (c) negatively related to deviant behavior.

---

[9] Hypotheses 1 through 8A can be represented symbolically as follows:
Let "a" represent school status; let "b" represent affect toward school; let "c" represent "involvement..."; and let "d" represent deviant behavior. The letter R will represent a relationship.
We are saying that: a → b → c → d

If this model is correct the following relationships must hold:

H_1 Rab is positive; Rac and Rad are negative

H_2 Rbc and Rbd are negative

H_3 Rcd is positive

H_4 Rcd>Rbd>Rad

H_5 Rac.b = 0 (or<Rac) and Rad.b = 0 (or<Rad)

H_6 Rbd.c = 0 (or<Rbd)

H_{6A} Rad.c = 0 (or<Rad)

H_7 Rad.bc = 0 (or<Rad)

H_8 Rbc.a - Rbc and Rbd.a = Rbd

H_{8A} Rcd.a = Rcd and Rcd.b = Rcd and Rcd.ab = Rcd

Hypothesis 2: Affect toward school should be (a) negatively related to involvement in an antischool subgroup, and (b) negatively related to deviant behavior.

Hypothesis 3: Involvement in an antischool subgroup should be positively related to deviant behavior.

Establishing relationships among the elements of a causal chain is only the first task in testing the veracity of the causal chain. The relationship netween school status and deviant behavior is, according to the hypothesized causal chain, mediated by two intervening variables. Therefore, one would expect that relationship to be weaker than the relationship between affect toward school and deviant behavior, which is mediated by only one variable. Likewise, the relationship between involvement in an antischool subgroup and deviant behavior is (hypothetically) a direct one, so it should be stronger than either of the other two relationships. In other words, the closer a variable in a causal chain is to the dependent variable, the stronger the relationship between that variable and the dependent variable should be. Given this principle a further hypothesis can be stated:

Hypothesis 4: The relationship between involvement in an antischool subgroup and deviant behavior should be stronger than the relationship between affect toward school and deviant behavior, which should be stronger than the relationship between school status and deviant behavior.

Even if the relationship between the independent, intervening, and dependent variables are in the predicted direction, the argument that affect toward school and involvement in an antischool subgroup intervene between school status and

deviant behavior is not yet established. If a variable intervenes between an independent and dependent variable, the original zero-order relationship between the independent and the dependent variables should vanish or be substantially reduced when statistical control is applied on the intervening variable (Cf. Rosenberg, 1968, pp. 58-66). According to the theory, the relationship between school status and involvement in an antischool subgroup is due to the fact that school status leads to negative or positive affect toward school, and it is affect that serves as the proximate cause of involvement in an antischool subgroup. So one would expect the zero-order relationship between school status and involvement in an antischool subgroup to vanish or be substantially reduced when the effect of affect toward school is controlled. Likewise, the relationship between school status and deviant behavior should vanish or be substantially reduced when the effect of affect toward school is controlled. Hence:

> Hypothesis 5: When affect toward school is held constant, the relationships between school status and involvement in an antischool subgroup, and between school status and deviant behavior should disappear or be substantially reduced.

Involvement in an antischool subgroup is seen as intervening between affect toward school and deviant behavior. Thus, another hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 6: When involvement in an antischool subgroup is held constant, the relationship between affect toward school and deviant behavior should disappear or be substantially reduced.

"Involvement" also intervenes between school status and deviant behavior, so a correlary hypothesis can be stated:

> Hypothesis 6A: When involvement in an antischool subgroup is held constant, the relationship between school status and deviant behavior should disappear or be substantially reduced.

A further test of the hypothesized causal chain takes into account the fact that both affect toward school and involvement in an antischool subgroup intervene between school status and deviant behavior. Just as controlling for any one of the intervening variables should substantially reduce the relationship between school status and deviant behavior, so should simultaneously controlling for both. Thus, another hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 7: When affect toward school and involvement in an antischool subgroup are held constant, the relationship between school status and deviant behavior should disappear or be substantially reduced.

One further statement can be made regarding the relationships between the variables in the causal chain. The relationship between any two variables in the causal chain should be unaffected when antecendent variables are controlled. If the relationship between two variables (a and x) is produced by an intervening variable (b) (thus a→b→x), then it is b that causes x. The relationship between b and x is a direct one, so, theoretically, that relationship should be unaffected no matter what control variables are introduced, including a.

This principle allows two further hypotheses:

Hypothesis 8: The relationships between affect toward school and involvement in an antischool subgroup and affect toward school and deviant behavior should be unaffected when school status is held constant.

Hypothesis 8A: The relationship between involvement in an antischool subgroup and deviant behavior should be unaffected when school status, affect toward school, or both are held constant.

If hypotheses 1 through 8A are supported by the data, we will have a basis for retaining the hypothesized sequence of events as an explanation of certain kinds of deviant behavior among high school boys. If the data do not support the hypotheses, doubt will be cast on the theory, and a rejection or revision will be in order.

A Test of the Hypotheses

Many of the hypotheses outlined have been thoroughly tested in related studies, but some, particularly those dealing with the effect of controlling for intervening variables, have not. A modest test of all of the hypotheses derived from the causal chain was conducted by the present author (Phillips, 1974). That study and its outcome will be described in this section.

The sample for the study consisted of 469 boys at two high schools in central New York State. These boys represent about 2/3 of all boys attending the schools because the boys were surveyed during regular physical education classes, and some boys involved in off campus PE activity (e.g., bowling) or co-ed classes were not available. An examination of the

sample revealed that it was comparable to the "universe" of all boys at the two schools. No significant "between-school" differences were found in the sample either.

The data for the study were obtained via anonymous questionnaries. School status (failure or success) was determined by self-reported grade averages for the immediately preceding grading period. Affect toward school was measured by a single item asking whether respondents liked, disliked, or were neutral toward school. Responses were dichotomized between "like or neutral," and "dislike." Involvement in an antischool subgroup was determined by responses to a series of questions regarding the "three best friends" of respondents. Finally, deviant behavior was measured by responses to a scale of "delinquent behavior" (Hirschi, 1969, p. 62) and to questions about drinking, smoking, truancy, and being "sent out of class." In all cases past involvement ("used to, but I don't anymore") or passing involvement ("yes, one or two times") was considered a "no" response, while more frequent, current involvement was treated as a "yes." (See Phillips, 1974, for a thorough discussion of sampling procedures and measurements of the variables.)

Relationships Among the Variables

The first three hypotheses stated in this paper merely predict that the elements in the hypothetical causal chain are related. That is, a change in one variable should result in a change in the other. If we compare boys who are succeeding

in school--i.e., receiving high grades--to boys who are failing--receiving poor grades--we should expect differences to appear in affect toward school, in involvement in an antischool subgroup, and in deviant behavior. Do such differences exist according to the data? Table 1 indicates that school status is indeed related to each of the subsequent variables, as predicted by Hypothesis 1. Boys who enjoy "high school status" are more likely to like school, less likely to have deviant friends (be involved in an antischool subgroup), and less likely to engage in deviant behavior. The percentage differences in the right-hand column of Table 1 show the magnitude and direction of each relationship.

Tables 2 and 3 support Hypotheses 2 and 3. Affect toward school and "involvement" are related to each other and to deviant behavior as predicted in the hypotheses. Again relationships are expressed in terms of percentage differences in the right-hand columns of Tables 2 and 3. Boys who like school tend to be somewhat less likely than boys who dislike school to have deviant friends, and they are somewhat less likely to engage in deviant behavior. Boys who have deviant friends are far more likely to have engaged in various forms of deviant behavior than are boys who do not have deviant friends.

No surprises so far. Hypotheses 1 through 3 are supported by the data. These relationships appear widely in the literature. The school failure/delinquency relationship is widely reported. The impact of low academic track on delinquency is discussed by Kelly (1974, 1975), by Frease (1969), and by

Table 1

Relationships between School Status and Subsequent Variables in Percentages (N = 469)

	School status		Percentage difference
	High (N=362)[a]	Low (N=107)	
Affect toward school:			
like or neutral	82	67	15**
Deviant friends:			
yes	35	51	-16**
Deviant behavior:			
truancy	27	37	-10*
sent out of class	22	35	-13**
smoking	28	52	-24**
drinking	65	76	-11*
delinquency	28	33	- 5

[a]This number varies slightly due to nonresponses to some questions.

*$p<.05$, one-tailed Chi-Square test.

**$p<.01$.

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Table 2

Relationships between Affect toward School and Subsequent Variables in Percentages (N = 467)

	Affect toward school		Percentage difference
	Like or neutral (N=368)[a]	Dislike (N=99)	
Deviant friends:			
yes	33	60	-27**
Deviant behavior:			
truancy	25	43	-18**
sent out of class	23	33	-10*
smoking	29	49	-20**
drinking	65	78	-13**
delinquency	27	37	-10*

[a]This number varies slightly due to nonresponse to some questions.

*$p<.05$.

**$p<.01$.

Table 3

Relationships between Having Deviant Friends and Deviant Behavior in Percentages (N = 469)

	Deviant friends		Percentage difference[b]
	Yes (N=180)[a]	No (N=289)	
Deviant behavior:			
truancy	52	14	38
sent out of class	41	15	26
smoking	58	17	41
drinking	89	54	35
delinquency	53	15	38

[a]This number varies slightly due to nonresponses to some questions.

[b]$p<.001$ in all cases.

Schafer and Olexa (1971) and the effect of poor grades by Stinchcombe (1964, p. 132), by Hirschi (1969) and by Gold (1970). The affect toward school/deviant behavior relationship has been less studied, but Polk and Halferty (1966), Kelly and Balch (1971) and Hirschi (1969) found relationships comparable to those reported here. The relationship between having deviant friends and engaging in deviant behavior has also been reported. Of particular interest are studies by Loft (1969), by Gold (1970), and by Reiss and Rhodes (1964).

Hypothesis 4 is the first hypothesis that directly addresses the truth of the overall causal chain. In any causal chain, the closer a variable is to the dependent variable (deviant behavior) the stronger the relationship with the dependent variable should be. Table 4 represents the magnitude of the relationships of school status, affect toward school, and "deviant friends," respectively, with deviant behavior. According to Hypothesis 4, the magnitude of the relationships should increase as one moves from left to right. The case of truancy fits the hypothesis well. The percentage difference for the relationship between having deviant friends and truancy is +38, which is stronger than the relationship between affect toward school and truancy (-18), which is in turn stronger than the relationship between school status and truancy (-10). However, this pattern does not prevail for all five forms of deviant behavior. Table 4 contradicts Hypothesis 4 in the cases of "sent of of class" and "smoking," and provides only weak support in the case of "drinking."

Table 4

Relationships between Deviant Behavior and: School Status, Affect toward School and Deviant Friends, Expressed as Percentage Differences[a]

	School status	Affect toward school	Deviant friends
Deviant behavior:			
truancy	-10	-18	38
sent out of class	-13	-10	26
smoking	-24	-20	41
drinking	-11	-13	35
delinquency	- 5	-10	38

[a]Compiled from Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Thus the data do not support Hypothesis 4. This apparent failure of Hypothesis 4 will be discussed in a later section of this paper. The failure can mean one of three things: something is wrong with the theory; something is wrong with the data; or chance sampling error provided a false picture which can be corrected in subsequent studies.

Controlling for Intervening Variables

Hypotheses 5 through 8A are all based on the same logic regarding intervening variables. To establish a variable as intervening one must

(1) Establish a relationship between any two variables (as has been done via Tables 1, 2, and 3).

(2) Stratify the sample by the hypothesized intervening variable or variables (i.e., control for the effects of the intervening variable).

(3) Determine that the original relationship has disappeared or been substantially reduced (Rosenberg, 1968, Ch. 3).

The causal chain places both affect toward school and involvement in an antischool subgroup as intervening variables. School status is seen as a cause of deviant behavior, but not as a direct cause. The argument is, rather, that school status directly influences affect toward school, which then influences "involvement...," which is the direct cause of deviant behavior.

Setting "involvement..." aside for a moment, the procedure for determining whether affect toward school intervenes between school status and deviant behavior can be illustrated.

A relationship between school status and various forms of deviant behavior has already been established. Next the sample must be stratified by affect toward school. This means we separate the cases in which boys like school from those in which boys dislike school, then reexamine the relationship between school status and deviant behavior first among boys who like school and then among boys who dislike school. Theoretically, the reason boys low in school status engage more in deviant behavior is their dislike for the school. If a boy likes school he should be unlikely to engage in deviant behavior, whether he is succeeding or failing in school. Likewise, a boy who dislikes school should tend to engage in deviant behavior whether he is succeeding or failing in his school work. Once we know whether a boy likes or dislikes school, knowing about his school status should do little to predict how involved he will be in deviant behavior.

Table 5 allows an examination of the relationship between school status and deviant behavior with affect toward school controlled. The left side of the table is limited to boys who like or are neutral toward school while the right side of the table is limited to boys who dislike school. Rather than providing two sets of percentage differences (one set for each side of the table), the percentage differences are combined and weighted according to the number of subjects represented in the tables--in this case differences between "high" and "low" school status are combined giving a weight of 368 (296 + 72)

Table 5

Deviant Friends and Deviant Behavior by School Status, Controlling for Affect toward School in Percentages (N = 467)

	Affect toward school				
	Like or neutral		Dislike		WNPD
School status	High (N=296)[a]	Low (N=72)	High (N=64)	Low (N=35)	
Deviant friends:					
yes	30	43	55	69	-13
Deviant behavior:					
truancy	22	35	45	40	- 9
sent out of class	21	32	30	40	-11
smoking	25	46	42	63	-21
drinking	63	71	73	85	- 9
delinquency	26	31	37	37	- 4

[a]This number varies slightly due to nonresponses to some questions.

to the "like or neutral" side and of 99 (64 + 35) to the "dislike" side. The result is a single set of weighted net percentage differences (WNPD)--combined percentage differences weighted according to the number of cases they represent and net the effect of affect toward school. (See Spady (1970b) for a discussion of this procedure. A percentage difference (PD) is analogous to a correlation coefficient, WNPD is analogous to a partial correlation coefficient. Comparing the original deviant behavior by school status, relationships to the same relationships (WNPDs) with the effect of affect toward school controlled, we can determine whether Hypothesis 5 is correct.

Table 6 reveals only a slight reduction in the relationship between school status and "deviant friends" and that between school status and deviant behavior. In short, Hypothesis 5 is <u>not</u> supported by the data. Again a hypothesis placing affect toward school in an intervening position between school status and the subsequent variables in the causal chain has failed.

By repeating the procedure described above, Hypotheses 6 and 6A can be tested. If "involvement in an antischool subgroup" (having deviant friends) intervenes between affect toward school and deviant behavior, the original relationship between affect toward school and deviant behavior should disappear or be substantially reduced when "involvement in an antischool subgroup" is controlled. Table 7, comparing percentage differences for the original relationship with WNPDs

Table 6

Deviant Friends and Deviant Behavior by School Status Compared to Weighted Net Percentage Differences (WNPDs) by School Status, Controlling for Affect toward School

	Percentage Differences by School status[a]	WNPSs by school status controlling for affect toward school
Deviant friends	-16	-13
Deviant behavior:		
truancy	-10	- 9
sent out of class	-13	-11
smoking	-24	-21
drinking	-11	- 9
delinquency	- 5	- 4

[a]From Table 1.

Table 7

Deviant Behavior by Affect toward School Compared to WNPDs Controlling for Deviant Friends

	Percentage differences by affect toward school[a]	WNPDs by affect toward school controlling for deviant friends
Deviant behavior:		
truancy	-18	-10
sent out of class	-10	- 3
smoking	-20	-13
drinking	-13	- 7
delinquency	-10	- 1

[a]From Table 2.

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for the same relationships when the effect of having deviant friends is controlled, reveals a substantial reduction in the original relationships when having deviant friends is controlled.

Table 8, designed to test Hypothesis 6A, reveals a consistent drop in relationships between school status and various forms of deviant behavior when "deviant friends" is controlled. Thus, Hypotheses 6 and 6A are supported by the data. "Involvement in an antischool subgroup" does appear to belong both between school status and deviant behavior and between affect toward school and deviant behavior--as it is in the causal chain presented earlier in this paper.

Hypothesis 7 may be seen as a combination of earlier hypotheses. This hypothesis merely states that affect toward school and involvement in an antischool subgroup combine to intervene between school status and deviant behavior. Table 9 bears out the prediction in Hypothesis 7 that WNPDs controlling simultaneously for affect toward school and deviant friends will be smaller than percentage differences representing the original relationships between school status and various forms of deviant behavior.

Hypotheses 8 and 8A are based on the principle that controlling for variables in the causal chain that <u>do not</u> intervene between any subsequent variables should have no impact on the original relationships between those subsequent variables. The data will not be presented here, but Phillips (1974) found virtually no effect whatever from controlling for prior variables on any pair of subsequent variables in the

Table 8

Deviant Behavior by School Status Compared to WNPDs Controlling for Deviant Friends

	Percentage differences by school status[a]	WNPDs by school status controlling for deviant friends
Deviant behavior:		
truancy	-10	- 6
sent out of class	-13	- 8
smoking	-24	-17
drinking	-11	- 6
delinquency	- 5	- 1

[a]From Table 1.

Table 9

Deviant Behavior by School Status Compared to WNPDs Controlling for Affect toward School and Deviant Friends

	Percentage differences by school status[a]	WNPDs by school status controlling for affect and deviant friends
Deviant behavior:		
truancy	-10	- 5
sent out of class	-13	- 8
smoking	-24	-16
drinking	-11	- 5
delinquency	- 5	0

[a]From Table 1.

causal chain. That is, Hypotheses 8 and 8A were clearly supported by the data.

Discussion: Hypotheses 1 through 8A

First, let us present a diagram of the causal chain tested here.

School status	→	Affect toward school	→	Involvement in an antischool subgroup	→	Deviant behavior

The hypotheses constitute predictions about the data. Each hypothesis represents a statement that should be true, given the truth of the theoretical causal chain. All of the hypotheses must be supported by the data if the causal chain is to be retained as a viable theory. When any of the hypotheses are not supported, the theory should be modified to bring it into conformity with the data.

The findings of the study can be summarized as follows:

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 are all supported. The variables in the causal chain are related as predicted.

Hypothesis 4 is not fully supported, in that the relationship between affect toward school and deviant behavior is not stronger than the relationship between school status and deviant behavior.

Hypothesis 5 is not supported. Affect toward school does not intervene between school status and "involvement..." (deviant friends). Neither does it intervene between school status and deviant behavior.

Hypotheses 6 and 6A are supported. "Involvement..." appears to intervene between the two prior variables (school status and affect toward school) and deviant behavior.

Hypothesis 7 is supported. Affect toward school and "involvement..." combined appear to intervene as predicted.

Hypotheses 8 and 8A are supported, and convincingly so. The prior variables in the causal chain do not appear to intervene between any pair of subsequent variables.

The failure of Hypotheses 4 and 5 indicates that affect toward school does not intervene between school status and the subsequent variables in the causal chain.

The following causal chains are still tenable, according to the data:

(1) School status → "involvement..." → deviant behavior

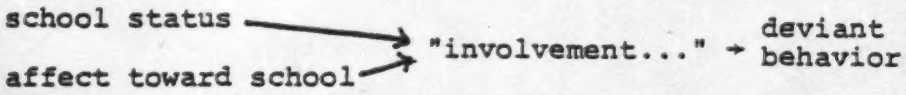
(2) Affect twoard school → "involvement..." → deviant behavior

The following models are falsified:

(3) School status → affect toward school → "involvement..."

(4) School status → affect toward school → deviant behavior

Models (1) and (2) can be combined to form a modified causal chain. Affect toward school does not intervene between school status and the subsequent variables, but it might partly cause "involvement...," which in turn produces deviant behavior. Removing affect toward school from its intervening position and placing it beside school status yields the following causal chain, which is consistent with the present data.



One is reluctant to abandon an hypothesis that seems to make sense, even in the face of contradictory data. The data contradict hypotheses 4 and 5. Affect toward school does not appear to intervene as the theory indicated. It could be that the failure of "affect" to intervene as predicted is due to some deficiency in the study rather than to a flaw in the theory. This approach is unpalatable, because most of the hypotheses have been supported by the data so far. The answer, of course, must await replication employing different populations and other ways of measuring variables.

Involvement in an antischool subgroup (deviant friends) has been found to intervene between school status and various forms of deviant behavior elsewhere (Loft, 1969), so that finding is replicated by at least one study. Several studies have found an association between school status and deviant behavior, and several other have found a strong relationship between "deviant friends" and deviant behavior, as did this study.

As further examination of this problem proceeds, the theory or theories must be modified to conform to the data. A common problem of many theories of deviant behavior is that they are not falsifiable. They may be vague in their definition of variables, or they may be vague or ambiguous as to the relationships that obtain between the variables. We have tried to be very clear as to what we mean in our theoretical discussion. Even though part of the theory failed to survive the test provided, we have tried to benefit from this by modifying the theory to conform to the facts.

Discussion: What It All Means

The data of the present study, along with that of a considerable number of related studies, indicate that school-related causes--school status and affect toward school--can act to create some deviant behavior among high school boys.

School status in particular appears to be an important determinant of juvenile misconduct. A number of studies indicate that school status is far more important than social class (commonly thought to be a critical variable) in the production of deviant behavior, when both are controlled (Schafer & Olexa, 1971, p. 49; Kelly & Balch, 1971; Phillips, 1974; Kelly, 1974; Polk & Halferty, 1966). Palmore and Hammond (1964) examined the relative impact of school status, race, and availability of illegitimate opportunity on delinquency among subjects of low socioeconomic class. Analysis of the Palmore-Hammond data reveals that school status was far more strongly related to delinquency (WNPD = 32) than were race (WNPD = 11) or illegitimate opportunity (WNPD = 6) when the three variables were simultaneously controlled.[10]

Subsequent studies may provide varying estimates of the relative importance of low school status (failure in school)

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[10] Could it be that the school status/deviant behavior causation runs in the reverse direction? That is, could deviant behavior produce low school status? Were this true the entire theory would be falsified. Most researchers have been concerned with this issue, and the available evidence appears to support the direction of causation employed in the present study. The issue is by no means closed, however, and a consideration of this issue is available (Phillips & Kelly, 1977).

in the production of adolescent misconduct, but it appears clear that some of the millions of delinquent acts that occur annually in this country result from a process similar to the one described in this paper. Can this process be interrupted? The answer is an emphatic "maybe." Serious efforts theoretically to explain the connection between school failure and delinquent behavior have revealed the complexity of the issue, and have resulted in more than a few surprises such as the failure of certain hypotheses in the study reported here. School reform efforts aimed at reducing the negative impact of school failure will undoubtedly provide similar surprises.

A promising note can be found in two distinct bodies of literature on American high schools. Studies by Barker and Gump (1964), by Willems (1964, 1967), and by Wicker (1968) suggest that in small high schools there are usually not enough students to fill all of the "slots" available on school teams, clubs, and committees. Therefore virtually everyone, including poor students, is encouraged to participate in some approved activity. In contrast to small schools, students in big schools must compete for these positions. Many students, particularly those with poor grades, are effectively denied the opportunity to participate. Wicker (1968) and Willems (1967) found that students who did participate--and in small schools this included practically all students--felt that school was a fulfilling, enjoyable experience. Studies of high school athletes have found that the positive behavioral

outcomes associated with athletic participation are mainly concentrated among boys who would, without athletic success, be failures in school (Schafer, 1969; Schafer & Rehberg, 1970; Phillips & Schafer, 1970, 1971).

These studies suggest that success in one area of school endeavor may serve to bind a boy to the purposes of the school and to reduce his inclination to rebel against those purposes. James Coleman (1961) has observed:

> The fundamental competition in a high school is neither for grades, nor for athletic achievements, nor any other such activity. It is a competition for recognition and respect--the elements of which status is composed--in the eyes of one's fellows. (p. 143)

Perhaps the school can widen the scope of abilities that it rewards to include some of the things (e.g., automobile mechanics, CB radio proficiency) in which the usual failures might excel. Perhaps high schools can be broken into small clusters, each with a full set of teams, committees, and the like, but with a shortage of students to fill the positions in those activities.

Such relatively small reforms may well pay off in a reduction of delinquent behavior. Enough is known at this point to merit reform efforts. Such efforts will mark, not a final phase of extensive studies of the connection between school and delinquency, but a beginning, or perhaps a continuation, of a long effort to provide better schooling for our nation's youth.

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